



# Neil Cummins Elementary School Travel Plan



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# 1. Purpose

## 1.1. SR2S Planning, Implementation and Monitoring

The Neil Cummins Elementary School Travel Plan is the blueprint for identifying and prioritizing Safe Routes to School (SR2S) programs, resources, and capital improvements. The Travel Plan also documents program activities and impacts on school-related travel that can be used to assess the success of the SR2S program over time, and important school-specific transportation policies and operations.

The Travel Plan differs from most plans in that it is not a snapshot in time but a living document; one that is repeatedly updated and modified to reflect school staff, community, and parent input along with technical information and lessons learned. This input is primarily captured by a SR2S task force that meets periodically to identify and address new concerns. For more information on Safe Routes to School partnerships in Marin County, visit [www.saferoutestoschools.org](http://www.saferoutestoschools.org)

## 1.2. Marin County Measure A

The Transportation Sales Tax Measure Expenditure Plan approved by voters as Measure A in November 2004 dedicates an estimated \$332 million in local sales tax revenues to transportation needs in Marin County. Approximately \$36.5 million (11%) of the sales tax expenditure has been earmarked to reduce school related congestion and safer access to schools. These funds are allocated to three sub-strategies, or programs:

- Safe Routes to School (SR2S)
- Crossing Guards
- Safe Pathways to School

The Safe Pathways infrastructure program is integral to the success of the overall strategy; it is the capital improvement element of the Safe Routes to School program. As a stated policy in the *Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM) Measure A – Transportation Sales Tax Strategic Plan Update (2009)*, all projects eligible for Safe Pathways funding must be identified in Safe Routes plans. The Neil Cummins Elementary Travel Plan qualifies as such a plan and identifies potential capital projects eligible for Safe Pathways funding.

# Neil Cummins Elementary School Profile

## 1.3. School Location

58 Mohawk Avenue Avenue  
Corte Madera, CA 94925



The Neil Cummins School site is completely set back from adjacent street frontage. The northern and eastern sides of the school are bounded by drainage channels and the backs of single-family homes. The south and west sides of the school are contiguous to Town Park, a public city park that fronts onto Tamalpais Drive and Pixley Avenue.

## 1.4. Enrollment and Demographics

**Table 1** shows the number of students enrolled in each grade for the 2008/09 school year. **Table 2** shows the racial and ethnic breakdown of the student population

*Table 1: Neil Cummins School Enrollment by Grade, 2008/09*

Grade Level	Enrollment
Kindergarten	155
Grade 1	137
Grade 2	155
Grade 3	140
Grade 4	153
Total	740
<i>Source: California Department of Education</i>	

*Table 2: Neil Cummins Racial and Ethnic Subgroups, 2008/09*

Racial and Ethnic Subgroup	Number of Students	Percent of Students
African American	6	0.8%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0%
Asian	34	4.6%
Filipino	0	0%
Hispanic or Latino	54	7.3%
Pacific Islander	0	0%
White (Not Hispanic)	530	71.6%
Multiple or No Response	116	15.7%
<i>Source: California Department of Education</i>		

## 1.5. Existing Conditions

### Entrances to School

- **Primary School Entrance:** The driveway that extends off Mohawk Avenue
- **Pedestrians and Bicyclists:** Pedestrians and bicyclists can enter the school site from the south and west via pathways in Town Park and from the north via a multiuse path
- **ADA Access:** NA

### Cross Streets

- **Cross Street:** Monona Drive

### Traffic Controls

- The intersection of Mohawk Avenue/Monona Drive is a T-intersection, stop-sign controlled on the Monona Drive approach.
- The intersection of Mohawk Avenue/Hickory Avenue is a T-intersection, stop-sign controlled on the Hickory Avenue approach. The intersection of Hickory Avenue/Ash Avenue is a T-intersection, stop-sign controlled on the Ash Avenue approach.
- The intersection of Hickory Avenue/Birch Avenue is a T-intersection, stop-sign controlled on the Birch Avenue approach.
- The intersection of Pixley Avenue/Redwood Avenue is a T-intersection, stop-sign controlled on the Redwood Avenue approach.

### Crosswalks

Marked crosswalks are provided at the following locations near the school:

- Mohawk Avenue at school entrance has a yellow zebra (diagonal) crosswalk on the north leg.
- Mohawk Avenue/Monona Drive has a yellow transverse crosswalk on the east leg.
- Mohawk Avenue/Hickory Avenue has a yellow transverse crosswalk on the west leg.
- Hickory Avenue/Ash Avenue has a yellow transverse crosswalk on north leg.
- Hickory Avenue/Birch Avenue has a yellow transverse crosswalk on north leg.
- Pixley Avenue/Redwood Avenue has a yellow transverse crosswalks on the north and west legs.

### Crossing Guards

- **Location of TAM Crossing Guards:** There are two TAM-funded crossing guards stationed in the vicinity of Neil Cummins School, at the intersections of Corte Madera Avenue/Tamalpais Drive; and Tamalpais Drive/Eastman Avenue.
- **School Crossing Guards:** The Larkspur School District employs two crossing guards, one at Hickory Avenue/Mohawk Avenue, and one at Mohawk Avenue/School Driveway.

### Transit

- **School Bus Availability:** Neil Cummins School has no regular school busing.
- **Public Transit Availability:** The nearest public bus service to Neil Cummins School is Golden Gate Transit Route 117 which specifically serves the school, stopping at Tamalpais Drive and Eastman Avenue. The Twin Cities Shuttle Golden Gate Transit Route 221 runs every 35 minutes from 11 to 6:30 pm
- **Special Transit Needs Offered:** NA

### Bike Racks

- **Location of Bike Racks:** Neil Cummins School has 4 bicycle rack areas located at the back of the school (behind E wing), beside D wing, near the school office (between the office and the library), and in the middle of A wing.
- **Number of Bike Spaces:** NA
- **Rack Condition and Security:** NA

## 1.6. Policies

- **Location:** Because Neil Cummins School is set back from the local street network, drop-off and pick-up primarily occurs within the driveway loop off of the main school parking lot. Many parents park on nearby streets and walk their child in to school. Some families drop off children at the Corte Madera Rec parking lot, at the path entrance on Pixley Avenue, at the loading zone on Hickory Avenue and the loading zone on Mohawk Avenue.
- **Policy:** To reduce traffic congestion, children (and parents and staff) are encouraged to walk, ride bikes or scooters, join a carpool, or take the bus to and from school. The school offers the following detailed instructions to parents on proper drop-off/pick-up procedures:



*A parent is escorting their child from school.*

- There is NO PARKING ON CAMPUS between 6:00am and 3:30pm.
- Park off campus and walk (or have your kids walk to you), please! The parking lots across the grass are 2.5-minute walks.
- DRIVE SLOWLY, watching for students at ALL times!! Think of the consequences if you don't.
- NOTE CURB COLOR and SIGNS! Never even think about stopping at any red curb - EVER! If there is no space to stop at the white curb, you must either circle the loop slowly/safely until a space opens, or better yet, park off campus. The white curb is for loading/unloading; it is not a parking area.
- NEVER block a car parked in a handicapped space. Not even for a minute. The fine is severe for this action.
- NEVER park in a staff parking spot between 6:00am and 3:30pm. The ONLY spaces that are not for staff are the four 15-minute spots in the parking lot corner near the office. If you park in a staff space, staff is instructed to tightly park/box your car in, leave their keys with Ms Walker assistant principal... , and go to work. This means that you are going to have to go to the office, and Mr. Carvey/Ms. Clark will walk you to your car, reasoning gently with you to never, ever take a teacher's spot again. As it is, every day our lot only has room for about 85% of our hard-working staff, thus many who work here also park off campus and walk to work.

### Parking

**Staff and General Parking:** Staff parking is available in the school's main parking area, located along the southeast border of the site, with some additional staff spaces along the entrance driveway off Mohawk Avenue. Four 15-minute visitor spaces are provided in the school parking lot adjacent to the office; all other parking spaces are for staff. On-site parking accommodates about 85% of the daily staff demand; remaining staff park in off-site areas and walk to campus.

## 1.7. Classroom Education

Neil Cummins participates in the Safe Routes to Schools education program. Yearly Classes taught include:

- Stop Look and Listen (2<sup>nd</sup> grade)
- Walk Around the Block (2<sup>nd</sup> grade)
- Helmet Safety (4<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Traffic Safety Game Show (4<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Bicycle Rodeo (4<sup>th</sup> grade)
- Safety Art (all school)
- Family Mouse (Kindergarten)*not implemented in 2007, teachers opted out*
- Assembly (all school)*not in 2007 may be on alternating years*
- Riding with Youth

The Twin Cities Police Department works with the school district to provide officers for education during Safe Routes to Schools Rodeos. Officers are also available to speak with students and/or parents on traffic safety. The Twin Cities Police also offer the RADkids program through the Larkspur and Corte Madera Recreation departments. RADkids teaches youth how to cope with personal safety situations.

### 1.8. Encouragement Programs

The school has offered the following programs of encouragement:

- Golden Sneaker Award contest was conducted *in Fall 2005*
- Walk and Bike Across America was done in fall 2006. *may alternate events in future*
- International Walk to School day *every year*
- Weekly Walk to School Days *Wednesdays designated as Walk and Roll Days*
- Frequent Rider Miles *done in past years , may alternate for variety, not done in spring 2008*
- Pollution Punchcard *spring 2008*

For fall '05, '06, '07 the team leader introduced our program to all grades except kindergarten during science, P.E. or motor skills classes. In 2007, 4<sup>th</sup> graders were additionally introduced to our program through the bike rodeo.

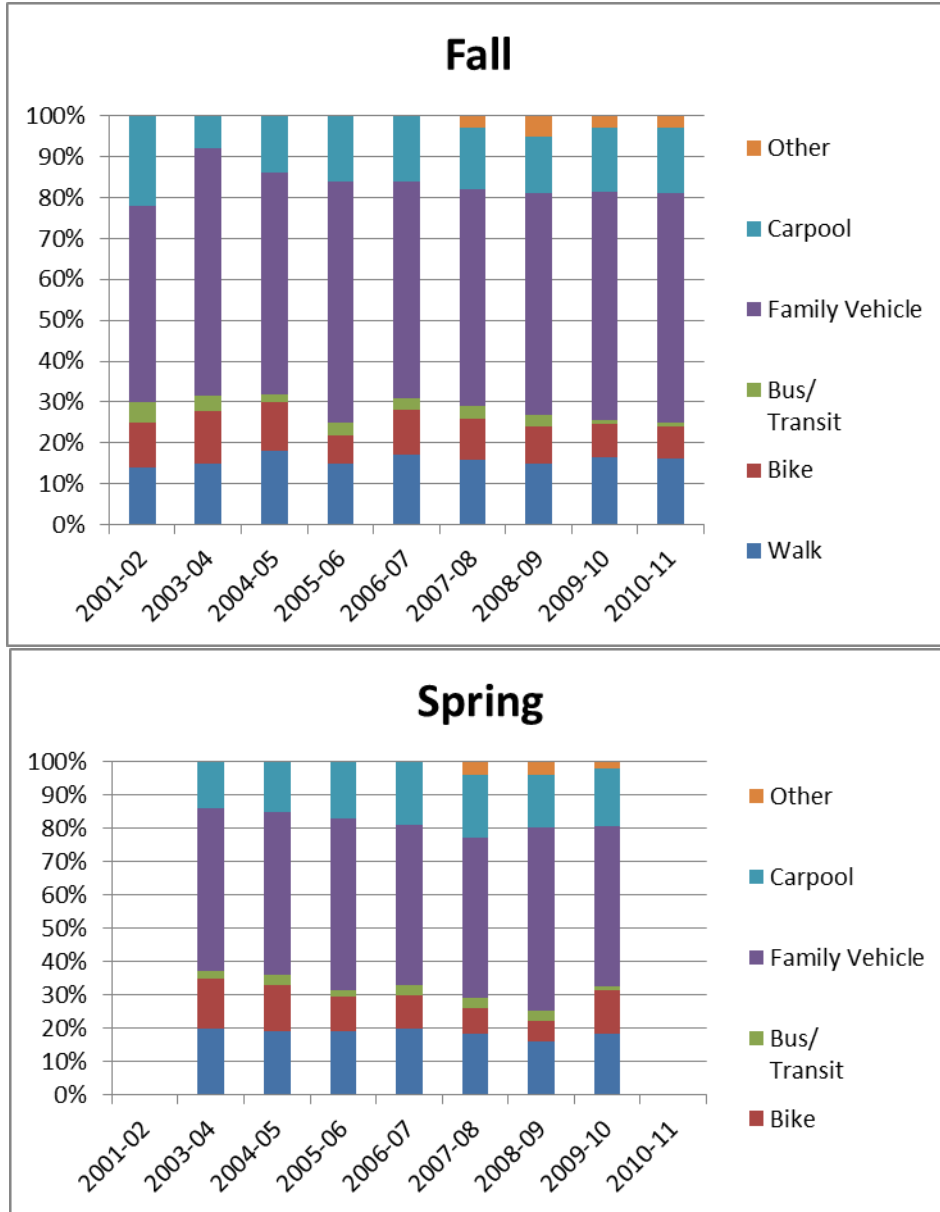
### 1.9. Student Surveys

Fall and spring student surveys have been conducted since the 2001-02 school year. Students are asked how they travel between home and school. **Table 3** shows the survey results through fall 2010.

*Table 3: How Students Got To School*

Year	Fall						Spring					
	Walk	Bike	Bus/ Transit	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Other	Walk	Bike	Bus/ Transit	Family Vehicle	Carpool	Other
2001-02	14%	11%	5%	48%	22%							
2003-04	15%	13%	4%	61%	8%		20%	15%	2%	49%	14%	
2004-05	18%	12%	2%	54%	14%		19%	14%	3%	49%	15%	
2005-06	15%	7%	3%	59%	16%		19%	10%	2%	51%	17%	
2006-07	17%	11%	3%	53%	16%		20%	10%	3%	48%	19%	
2007-08	16%	10%	3%	53%	15%	3%	18%	8%	3%	48%	19%	4%
2008-09	15%	9%	3%	54%	14%	5%	16%	6%	3%	56%	16%	4%
2009-10	17%	8%	1%	57%	16%	3%	18%	13%	1%	48%	17%	2%
2010-11	17%	8%	1%	57%	16%	3%						

**Figure 1** charts the travel information in **Table 3**. On average mode choices have remained fairly consistent from 2003 to 2010. When seasonal mode choice is compared, most alternative modes show slight increases in the spring over the fall.



**Figure 1: How Children Got To School**

# Barriers and Opportunities

## 1.10. Parent Survey

Team leaders administered volunteer parent/guardian surveys as part of the 2007-2008 travel plan process. The survey was distributed at school. Parents and guardians could either return the completed survey to the school or complete it online through a link on the Transportation Authority of Marin homepage. Neil Cummins Elementary returned 155 parent surveys.

### Concerns

The survey asked parents what concerns they had about their children walking and bicycling to school. Weather was the concern cited the most. Dangerous intersections and running late/tardiness were concerns cited often. **Table 4** shows detailed results to this question.

*Table 4: Parental Concerns*

Concern	Percent
Weather	35%
Dangerous intersections	31%
Running late/tardiness	30%
It's too far	27%
Child is too young	26%
Stranger danger	24%
Speeding cars	21%
On the way to work	21%
Unsafe or lack of sidewalks and/or bikeways	21%
Other	18%
Too much to carry	14%
It's too steep	6%
Child won't follow safety rules	5%
Lack of safe bike parking	2%
Scary dogs	1%
<i>Source: Parent Survey, 2007-08</i>	

### Potential Opportunities

The survey asked under what circumstances they would allow their child to walk or bike to school. **Table 5** shows the responses to the survey. The opportunity cited the most was is their children were “accompanied by other parents”. The opportunities cited second most were if their child “were older” and if crossing guards were at dangerous intersection.

*Table 5: Potential Opportunities to Increase Walking and Bicycle Among Children*

Opportunities	Percent
Accompanied by other parents	46%
When he/she is older	34%
Crossing guards at dangerous intersections	29%
Safety training was provided for students	19%
Improved sidewalks and paths	19%
Accompanied by other children	19%
Cars slowed down	19%
Improved intersections	16%
More police enforcement	15%
Park and walk locations where we could walk part way	9%
Secure bike storage was available	8%
Other	7%
Route maps were provided	5%
<i>Source: Parent Survey, 2007-08</i>	

**Likelihood to Carpool**

As part of the survey, parents were also asked under what circumstances they would carpool. Finding parents that lived close by was the most cited circumstance. **Table 6** shows the responses to this question.

*Table 6: Likelihood to Carpool*

Circumstance	Percent
You were familiar with the driver	29%
We already carpool	28%
You could find other parents to lived close by	19%
Other	8%
<i>Source: Parent Survey, 2007-08</i>	

**1.11. Walkabout Notes**

A walkabout was held at Neil Cummins Elementary School on May 27, 2004. Several locations were identified for improvement, including Lakeside, Pixley Avenue, and the school entrance. The issues identified included lack of marked crosswalks, desire for improved signing, poor visibility, and narrow sidewalks. Complete notes from the walkabout are provided in the **Appendix A** to this Travel Plan.



# Programs and Projects

## 1.12. Engineering Design Concepts

Based on the walkabout and Task Force meetings, a series of design concepts are summarized briefly below. The **Appendix B** shows these concepts in more detail.

### School Entrance at Mohawk Avenue

These improvements are aimed at improving safety at the crossing of Mohawk Avenue in front of the school. Improvements consist of installation of a marked crosswalk using ladder stripes and school crossing signs installed at the crosswalk and in advance of it to alert motorists of people using the crosswalk.

### Pixley Avenue at Redwood Avenue Improvements

Two options were developed for this intersection. First is the installation of high visibility marked crosswalks, signing, and red curb (to improve visibility). The second option is supplement the first option's improvements by the addition of STOP signs on Pixley Avenue. Modification of the landscaping and/or trimming could improve sight lines at this intersection.

### Trail Crossing at Lakeside

This improvement includes the installation of high visibility crosswalks, signing, and street narrowing via the widening of the sidewalks.

## Implementation Matrix

An implementation matrix with district wide improvements is in the Twin Cities District Plan.

## Appendix A: Walkabout Notes

Thursday, May 27, 2004

### List of Attendees:

Tasmin Pesso- Safe Routes Team Leader

Marilyn Clark- Principal

Jin Yang - Councilmember

Dave Bracken – Public Works

Patty Monge – Twin Cities Police

### Location #1: Lakeside

#### Issues:

- Offset crossing
- No crosswalk
- Blind curve, poor visibility
- Kids don't stop
- Narrow sidewalks
- Roll curb
- Drainage issues
- Utility pole
- Accessibility
- Proximity to controlled intersection



#### Ideas:

- Barriers on outside of sidewalk
- Crosswalk
- Stop sign for kids
- Light guard system

- Curb bulbs
- Raised crosswalk
- Warning signs
- Pavement markings
- Cut vegetation

Location #2: Pixley Avenue



**Issues:**

- No crossing guard
- Heavily traveled
- No stop sign
- No visibility
- Vegetation
- Parking

**Ideas:**

- Mirror
- Warning signs
- Zebra crossing
- Pavement markings
- Curb extension
- Stop sign

Location #3: School Entrance

**Issues:**

- Cars rolling over sidewalk
- No signage for crosswalk
- no crosswalk at driveway



- Relocate fundraising sign

**Ideas:**

- Enhance stop bar
- Move stop sign back to limit line
- Put in no left turn sign exiting school
- Add signage
- Crosswalk across driveway
- Re-stripe existing crosswalk zebra pattern

**Location #4: Other issues**

**Issues:**

- curb ramp missing at Redwood Avenue and Willow
- vegetation coming through path
- Don't feed the birds sign moved to where they actually feed them,

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## Appendix B: Engineering Concepts

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School entrance, looking west



Mohawk Ave. at School Entrance, looking south



Mohawk Ave., looking north

**SCHOOL ENTRANCE AT MOHAWK AVE.**  
**SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR NEIL CUMMINS SCHOOL**

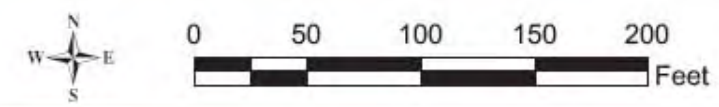
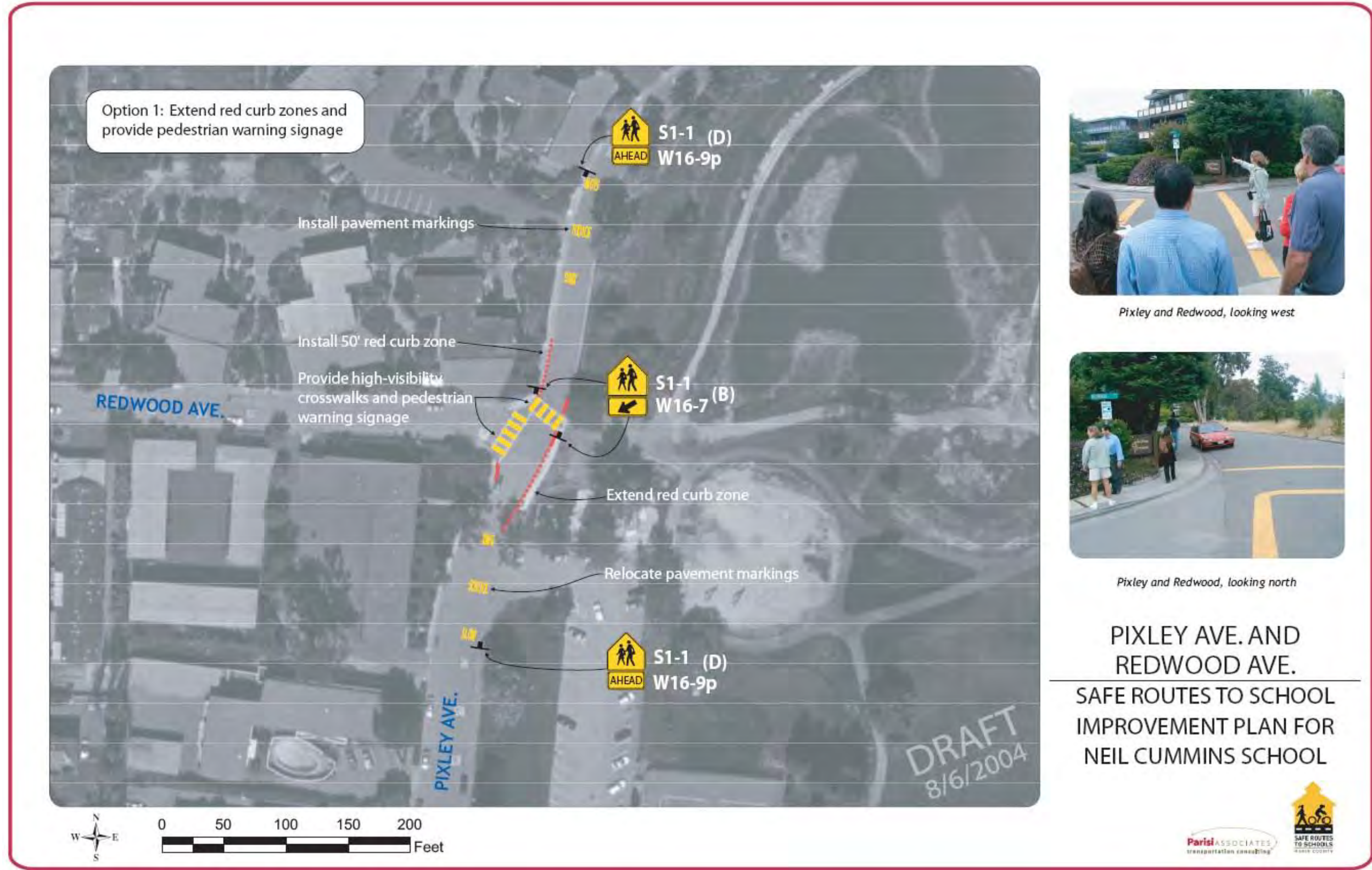


Figure 2: School Entrance at Mohawk Avenue



Pixley and Redwood, looking west



Pixley and Redwood, looking north

**PIXLEY AVE. AND REDWOOD AVE.**  
**SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PLAN FOR NEIL CUMMINS SCHOOL**



Figure 3: Pixely and Redwood Avenues



Figure 4: Pixely and Redwood Avenues Option 2